

Friday, May 30, 2014

36th annual state historic preservation awards, honoring projects, service and advocacy, presented Wednesday; Drs. David Pollack & A. Gwynn Henderson, Lexington, receive memorial award

Diane Comer
(502) 564-7005 Ext. 120
diane.comer@ky.gov

Frankfort, Ky. – Drs. David Pollack and A. Gwynn Henderson are co-recipients of the 2014 Ida Lee Willis Memorial Award, for lifetime achievement in research, education and preservation, presented during the 36th Annual Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation Historic Preservation Awards. The memorial award is the highest honor bestowed each year during the ceremony, which took place Wednesday at the Governor’s Mansion.

Pollack and Henderson, of Lexington, are archaeologists, professional colleagues and spouses. Both work for the Kentucky Archaeological Survey (KAS), a joint partnership between the Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office (KHC) and the University of Kentucky Department of Anthropology.



Photo, above, l-r: Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet Secretary Bob Stewart; Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation Chair Stephen L. Collins; Henderson; Pollack; Kentucky Heritage Council Executive Director Craig Potts

The awards ceremony takes place each May during National Historic Preservation Month, and awards are presented in partnership by the foundation and KHC. They are named for Kentucky’s first state historic preservation officer, the late Ida Lee Willis, wife of the late former Gov. Simeon Willis. The presentation of the memorial cup was made by Stephen L. Collins, foundation chair and last year’s memorial award recipient, and by the Willis’ daughter, Sally Willis Meigs.

“This award for outstanding commitment to historic preservation is being presented to not one, but two of the most dedicated preservationists and archaeologists working in the Commonwealth,” said Collins. “No two people could better represent the mission and meaning of this award.”

Henderson and Pollock have had stellar archaeological careers both as individuals and as a team. Henderson is education coordinator for KAS. Pollack is KAS director and a former staff archaeologist, review coordinator and site protection program manager for KHC. Both are also adjunct assistant professors in the UK Department of Anthropology. A copy of the tribute read by Collins is attached.

Other awards presented for projects went to Botherum, Lexington; Clarkson House, Vine Grove; First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown; and Wolf Pen Branch Mill Farm Mill Restoration, Jefferson County. Service to preservation awards went to Marian Development Group, Louisville; Upper Town Heritage Foundation, Paducah; and Liberty Hall/National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Frankfort. The Jenkins School Apartments project received a special Grassroots Partner Award, shared by Old Jenkins School Renovation Committee and AU Associates Inc., of Lexington. (See below for more.)

Awards List

Preservation Project Awards, for outstanding restoration or rehabilitation of historic buildings, went to:



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Mary Jean Kinsman, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Carloftis, and ILW Foundation Board Member Alice Heaton

Botherum, Lexington – Accepted by owners Jon Carloftis and Dale Fisher. Constructed in 1851, Botherum is a single-story home designed by John McMurtry, a Lexington architect and builder, and unique in that the design incorporates Greek, Roman, and Gothic architectural elements. Renowned architectural historian Clay Lancaster once wrote that “Botherum is a jewel of architecture, which contains the finest interior of its type in existence.” The property had been vacant for two decades prior to its extensive rehabilitation.



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Members Barbara Hulette and Ann Early Sutherland, Mr. Griffith, and ILW Foundation Board Member Chuck Parrish

Clarkson House, Vine Grove – Accepted by owner Robert W. Griffith. Dating to 1802, Clarkson House is a five-bay, two-story, Federal-style brick structure on a stone foundation, with a 1½-story frame and log wing added in the 1840s. Bob and his wife, Mary, a Clarkson descendant, completely restored the home, which had deteriorated to the point where some walls had collapsed. According to foundation board member Chuck Parrish, who presented the award, “The Griffiths made very few changes to the historic facades of the house, and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, repaired materials where possible and replaced only when necessary. It truly stands as a prime example to all that – like the Phoenix rising from the ashes – historic structures can be brought back to life, with perseverance and determination.”



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Betty Webb, Ms. Rucker, and ILW Foundation Board Member William Averell

First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown – Accepted by Pamela Rucker, interim minister, “in recognition of the swift decision to act on behalf of preserving their church, for themselves and future generations.” Constructed from 1865-70, the brick, Gothic Revival church recently underwent extensive structural repair when a pin joint on the historic truss framing began to fail, causing the potential for a serious structural breach. When the issue came to light, church leaders might have opted to demolish the building; fortunately, instead, acting at the direction of the congregation, major repairs were made, with the sanctuary closed from February-November 2013 for stabilization, including interior and exterior restoration work such as repair of plaster and masonry.



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Members Mary Jean Kinsman and Chuck Parrish, Ms. Runyon, Mr. French, and ILW Foundation Board Member Alice Heaton

Wolf Pen Branch Mill Farm, Mill Restoration, Jefferson County – Accepted by Meme Sweets Runyon and David French of River Fields Inc., on behalf of owner Sallie Bingham, who was recognized for outstanding stewardship of the historic grist mill located on her Wolf Pen Branch farm, and “for her commitment to restore the mill to the highest of standards and craftsmanship.” The four-story, limestone mill dates to 1875. In 2011, Ms. Bingham hired Ben Hassett, a nationally recognized historic water mill restorer and millwright, to meticulously repair, rebuild and restore the mill complex. She had previously donated a conservation easement for the farm to River Fields and the Kentucky Heritage Council, to ensure that the mill and 412 acres of farmland would remain undeveloped and protected into perpetuity.

Service to Preservation Awards, honoring those who have furthered historic preservation activities or had had a positive impact in their communities, went to:



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Betty Webb, Mr. Brown, and ILW Foundation Board Members Chuck Parrish and William Averell

Marian Development Group, Louisville – Accepted by co-owner Jake Brown, “in recognition of their commitment to invest not only in historic buildings but also in people.” The company’s Family Scholar Houses are building rehabilitation projects that provide affordable apartments for single parents, while they work toward completing their education and becoming self-sufficient. In the past two years, the company has completed three such projects in historic schools utilizing the historic preservation tax credit – Louisville’s Parkland Scholar House, circa 1891; the Stoddard Johnson Scholar House, a former 1915 Beaux Arts-style elementary school; and in Covington, LaSalette Garden Apartments, formerly LaSalette Academy, which was singled out for well-executed window restoration.



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Mary Jean Kinsman, Ms. Dobson, Ms. Cooper, and ILW Foundation Board Member Alice Heaton

Upper Town Heritage Foundation, Paducah – Accepted by Betty Dobson and Sheryl Cooper, for the organization’s long-term commitment to preserve and restore the Hotel Metropolitan and operate it as a bed and breakfast and museum focusing on African American heritage. Built in 1909, the hotel housed African Americans who had no other lodging options, and hosted some of the most notable musicians, politicians and entertainers of the 20th century. The foundation was honored for its work “partnering with individuals and organizations too numerous to name, to complete the arduous task of raising support, raising funds, and raising the roof for the preservation and rehabilitation of this historic gem.”



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Ann Early Sutherland, Mrs. Sally Willis Meigs, ILW Foundation Board Members Barbara Hulette and Chuck Parrish

Liberty Hall/National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Frankfort – Accepted by Mrs. Meigs, a former Colonial Dame, in recognition of the organization’s ongoing commitment to manage Liberty Hall Historic Site, including preservation of the buildings and through innovative programs and fundraising. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the management of the historic site as a museum by the Colonial Dames and the nonprofit by Liberty Hall Inc. Liberty Hall is a National Historic Landmark, constructed for Senator John Brown from 1796-1803, a structure Clay Lancaster called “the finest example of early Federal-era architecture in Kentucky.”



Photo l-r: ILW Foundation Board Member Barbara Hulette, Mr. Polly, Mr. Graham, ILW Foundation Board Member Ann Early Sutherland, Mr. and Mrs. Shook

New this year, the awards selection committee voted to give a special **Grassroots Partner Award**, shared by **Old Jenkins School Renovation Committee** and **AU Associates Inc., of Lexington**, for the preservation and restoration of the building into Jenkins School Apartments. The award was accepted by current committee chair and long-time volunteer James Polly; John and Rosemary Shook, who founded the committee; and Johan Graham of AU Associates. The circa 1912 Jenkins School is listed in the National Register, noted as the largest and finest school to be produced as part of Consolidated Coal Company’s efforts to develop Jenkins as a coal camp. The renovation committee worked since 1992 to preserve the building and prevent it from being demolished. AU Associates stepped in in 2012 to repurpose the historic school into safe, affordable senior housing, which opened in February.